

LATIN NOTES

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Address communications to FRANCES E. SABIN, Director of the Bureau

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A LETTER AND A REPLY

Continued from the January issue of *LATIN NOTES* in which the author, W. L. CARR, Professor of Latin at Teachers College, New York City, defined certain pedagogical terms frequently used in discussions of newer methods of teaching, expressions which were not clear to a correspondent.

1. The Objective Method. The teacher seeks to associate the Latin spoken or written word directly with the object, picture, act or quality which the word represents. The values of this method for interest and vividness of first impressions are obvious. Its limitations are also obvious.

2. The Oral Method. The teacher emphasizes the value for the pupil of *hearing* and *saying* Latin words, phrases, and sentences as well as and generally in advance of seeing and writing their printed symbols. At least this is true of the earlier stages of the work. Much oral reading of Latin is an essential feature.

3. The Direct Method. The teacher includes many features of the Objective and Oral Methods and attempts further to make Latin language the *medium* as well as the *end* of instruction. The pupil is encouraged to get the meaning of the spoken or written sentence *directly* (i.e., through the Latin itself) and not *indirectly* (i.e., through translation into English). The meaning of words not capable of objective presentation are learned from the context or through explanations in Latin. Forms and principles of syntax are first presented functionally, that is, in actual use, although these forms may later be organized into paradigms and the principles stated as rules for formal drill.

4. The Reading Method. The teacher includes many features of the three methods described above to cultivate in the pupil a language attitude toward Latin and to help the pupil acquire a fundamental stock of Latin words as well as a working knowledge of the more important grammatical forms and syntactical usages. Emphasis in later stages is placed on getting the meaning directly from the printed page. The teacher may give the pupil much practice in speaking, hearing, and writing Latin, but only as a means to his acquiring ability to read and understand Latin. An essential feature of this method is *much* well-graded, meaningful, connected Latin reading material and the learning of vocabulary, grammatical forms and principles of syntax from use, that is, functionally.

5. The Translation Method. As under the Reading Method described above, the teacher puts chief emphasis upon the pupil's getting the meaning from the printed page, but regularly employs transverbalization or translation as the chief means of teaching the pupil the meaning of words and grammatical forms, and thereby encourages him to transpose the words of the Latin sentence into the familiar order of the vernacular and to transverbalize each word into what he considers its nearest English equivalent. The skill developed by this method is that of "decoding" the Latin sentence into the vernacular and the stimulus-response bond commonly set up and strengthened by repetition is between the printed Latin word and the spoken English word. For example, printed *equis* brings the oral response "horse;" printed *equis* brings the oral response "to-or-for-horses;" printed *ambulabam* brings the oral response "I was walking." As in the Reading Method, the pupil learns his vocabulary, forms, and syntax from repeated use, that is, functionally. Much connected Latin "reading" material is an essential feature of the translation method, as it is of the Reading Method.

6. The Grammar-Translation Method or Grammar-Vocabulary-Translation Method. As in the translation method, just described, the teacher employs "translation" as the chief method of teaching the meaning of the words and forms and also as the regular method of testing the pupil's understanding of the meaning of words, forms, and sentences. The method differs from the translation method chiefly in that word-meaning, grammatical forms, and rules of syntax are regularly taught *formally* and *in advance of their use* in trans-

lation exercises, instead of functionally, that is, from use in sentences. Connected Latin "reading" material is not an essential feature of **The Grammar-Translation Method** when employed in teaching elementary Latin, although "reading" material of this sort often is used by teachers who employ this method.

In practice **The Grammar-Translation Method** admits of wide variations, especially as the method is presented in typical first-year Latin books:

- a. The *extreme grammar type* in which the pupil learns by rote the complete declension of a noun or a rather large unit of verb forms before he has had an opportunity to meet these forms in sentence context. A similar procedure is followed in regard to rules of syntax and vocabulary.
- b. The *piece-meal grammar-translation type* in which the pupil learns only one or two noun or verb forms at a time and then uses them in drill sentences before learning others.
- c. The *translation-grammar type* in which the pupil first meets the various forms in "reading" material and later has them presented in paradigm form for formal drill. Similarly syntactical uses are first met in "reading" material and the principle involved is then formulated into a principle. This principle is later presented in the form of a rule and set for mastery through formal drill. Also words are first met in sentence context, but later presented in a lesson vocabulary or word list for formal drill.

For an answer to your fourth question I suggest that you write directly to the head of the Latin department in each of the two schools to which you refer.

In answer to your fifth question I should say that the only important educational value which could possibly be lost by the use of **The Reading Method** would be "increased ability to speak and write correct and idiomatic English." Probably even this value could be more surely attained if the teacher has the pupil answer in good English questions based on the Latin read and comprehended directly, or occasionally requires oral or written translation of selected passages which have already been read directly for comprehension and discussed in class. In such translations the teacher can and should demand a much higher quality of English than that usually heard in the classroom of teachers who make a practice of requiring the oral translation of every Latin sentence in the reading assignment.

As to your sixth question, I think that translation should be regarded as a means to attaining such or such an objective and not an objective in itself. As I have tried to say in the preceding paragraph, a carefully prepared written translation may well serve as an effective means of increasing the pupil's ability to speak or write correct and idiomatic English. But when the teacher uses translation as the chief, if not the only means, of testing the pupils' comprehension of the Latin he has "read and his understanding of the Latin syntax involved," the result is quite likely to be a "literal" translation or something worse, which, if it does not actually harm the pupil's English, certainly will not help it much.

As to your seventh question, the phrase "power to read" should be limited to *direct* reading (that is, reading Latin as Latin and in the Latin order), although the word "read" to many Latin teachers seems to be synonymous with "translate" (that is, *reading Latin as English and in the English order* through the combined processes of transverbalization and transposition).

As to your last question, I understand that there is a merry little war going on in England between those at one extreme who favor the traditional **Grammar-Translation Method** and those at the other extreme who are ardent believers in a hundred percent **Direct Method**. Probably there, as well as here, the wise course to adopt is a Horatian "golden mean." My own choice would be a considerably

modified Direct Method, which might be described as an Oral-Objective-Reading-Grammar Method with much word analysis and with occasional practice in writing really good translations into English. In any case, I should, as far as possible, employ functional methods in all my teaching, drilling and testing.

Yours most sincerely,

W. L. CARR,

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A VISITOR FROM THE PAST

A story by STEVE VISNYAI, a student at the High School in Whiting, Indiana.

It was an awful night; a veritable battle of the elements was taking place. The wind voiced its rage in undulating but incessant howls and shrieks, and the rain lashed everything in its path in relentless fury. Fingers of lightning darted across the sky as if trying to claw the heavens apart, and the crashes of thunder resounded like the heavy chariot-wheels of Pluto.

I sat at the table, making a desperate attempt to concentrate on a Latin story, but the din of the storm made it extremely difficult. Finally I closed the book with a sigh of resignation; and in the next second the door burst open. I looked up but saw nothing. I stared at the doorway, in, I must confess, rigid fear, and tried to assure myself, as characters do in mystery tales, that it was merely the wind. Perhaps you'll consider me mad when I tell you what occurred next, or you may decide that it was only a dream, the result of eating mince-pie before retiring, but I insist, and will to my dying day, that what I saw that night really took place, that it was no hallucination or figment of my imagination, but an actuality.

There, before me, a grayish mist began to materialize. Slowly but steadily it acquired a shape, and soon I could discern the outline and the features of a human being. In another minute it was, to put it briefly, all there, and I saw, not more than five feet away from me, a man clad in the gracefully hanging robes of a Roman noble. He had somewhat light hair, a high, straight brow, a more or less long but straight nose, and a chin that suggested determination.

I stared at him speechlessly, not daring to move. Then his straight lips parted, and he emitted in a clear, resonant voice, "Gaius Julius Caesar sum—"

He paused, his eyes piercing me through and through, and my flesh grew cold. What horrible apparition was this? I continued to stare at him aghast. He was waiting, evidently, for me to speak, for I saw an expectant expression in his eyes. Finally, after summoning all my courage and strength, I straightened up, tried to appear nonchalant and unconcerned, as if this was but an ordinary occurrence in my eventful life, and spoke.

"H-hello," I said.

I thought I saw a twinkle in his eyes, but if I did, it was for only a moment. Then he began to talk, to talk in clear, well-spoken English.

"What is this strange land, my boy? I never heard of it when I yet walked on this earth as a mortal."

"Where did you come from, Caesar?" I ventured to ask, for, having answered his question, my fear slowly and gradually departed.

He remained silent, obviously considering the matter very seriously.

"Where did you come from?" I repeated.

He looked up, as if aroused from sleep.

"I come from the pleasant fields of the underworld," he finally said. "Far have I traveled since I emerged from Avernus a week ago, and many are the disappointments I have felt. Everything, everything I knew has disappeared."

"Straightway to the Forum I had gone, but I saw there nothing but ruins, only a few standing pillars left to represent

the glory that was Rome when I had left it. A new city stands on the Tiber and a new Caesar sends forth his legions to conquer lands—or to lose lands. Rome is no longer the only powerful nation, and always is it threatened by Gaul, Britain, Helvetia, all the countries that had once been under my undisputed, universal authority. Another Vercingetorix, Hitlerius by name, defiant and domineering, rules over the Germans.

"Next I went to Londinium in Britain and found that today it is the real Rome, the capital of a worldwide empire, on which, I heard someone remark, the sun never sets. And to think that once, centuries past, I had conquered the wild race that then lived in it! Today, in Britain, I find only an old Roman bath at a place called Strand Lane, the rocks of the mystic Druids at Stonehenge, the chalk cliffs at Dover, to remind me of the Britain that once belonged to me.

"Then I came here, to a land that, from what I have gathered, is a comparatively young nation, one that defied Britain and broke away from under its rule. I once had wondered, when I was in Gaul, what, if anything, was beyond that endless expanse of water.

"I like this nation. It is in many ways similar to the Rome I once knew. Rome had its Sabines, its Etruscans, its Gauls to conquer before it could get started; this land, if what I have learned about it is correct, had somewhat barbaric tribes to defeat, too. Just as Rome gradually spread, so your country expanded—westward, was it not?"

"You, too, have a Senate. I have seen your representatives expound and argue just as the old Romans were wont to do. Few, however, were as boisterous as your late—Huius Longus, I believe his name was.

"Rome had to face grave problems and troubles as your country today must. You have had your civil wars, and, until about seventy-five years ago, your slavery system. Rome had its economic troubles just as you today have. No society or government such as this can avoid them absolutely. Men are still assassinated as I was on the Ides of March. (Alas! Had I but hearkened to the counsel of my friends! Then, perhaps I could have helped Rome further, and perhaps her glory would never have perished.)

"Theatres, athletic games, schools, politics, Terpsichorean arts, orators, poets, historians, pedagogues, armies, navies, architecture, holidays—though somewhat changed—still exist as they did in Rome two thousand years ago. True, you have horseless chariots; spears that shoot forth deadly fire (perhaps the man that invented them was inspired by Vulcan); long lines of wagons that travel on steel lines with the speed of lightning; queer, flameless lamps; different clothes; better writing implements and more compact and handier books; strange means of communication. But had Rome lived on, she would have been the first to invent these things.

"You probably know nothing of Rome, however, with all its splendor and elegance, its power, its haughtiness. You know little of my conquests—"

"Ah, but I do, Julius," I interrupted him. I opened the book before me and read aloud: "Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres; unam incolunt Belgae, aliam Aquitani, tertiam Galli. Hi omnes lingua—"

I stopped to see how he was reacting to this. There he stood spellbound, amazed. I'll never forget that expression on his face. It was a look of surprise, joy, and sadness all at once—if you grasp my meaning. He seized the book eagerly. Trembling, he feverishly scanned those lines, the lines he had written centuries ago. What memories they undoubtedly recalled to him, what thoughts, what happy reminiscences! He looked at me. His eyes were filled with tears, but a faint smile was on his lips.

Suddenly I realized that he was fading away. Soon only a shapeless mist was before me, and that, too, disappeared in another minute. The door closed of its own accord apparently,

and I was again alone. I turned to the table with the intention of examining more closely the Latin book which he had touched so fondly, only to find that it had vanished, too.

I was dazed. For a while I could think of nothing but this august visitor from the dim, vague past. To think that I, a mere student, had actually been honored by the very presence of Julius Caesar! What an experience! Not for a moment, may I remind you, did I doubt the reality of the incident, even though I could not explain it plausibly, convincingly even to myself, nor do I attempt to explain it to you now. Every time I recall the scene I am filled with an undefinable sensation, a feeling of awe and pride—pride in being honored by such a guest, a man well known to the world but never actually seen by a living human until that unforgettable night when he appeared in my room—and an ecstatic thrill runs down my spine.

HOW INCREASE ENROLLMENT?— A PROJECT

Latin pupils in the Langley Junior High School visited the 7B classes the week before they were to make their elections of studies. Charts were made in preparation for this visitation: names of girls, of boys, and of months; word derivations; the red, green, and white dictionary poster showing the percentage of words derived from Latin, Greek, and other sources; diagrams of percentages of origin; terms from other studies, and so on, *ad infinitum*. The best charts were chosen and their makers carried them for exhibition purposes. A boy and girl were selected to carry on a dialogue in connection with the charts. Apparently this enterprise made a profound impression on the children who carried it out.

MRS. H. E. KOPSCHE,
Langley Junior High School,
Washington, D. C.

LEAGUE NOTES

Dr. Charles C. Mierow, Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, has accepted the National Chairmanship of the Lookout Committee. Attacks upon the Classics as they appear in print may be sent to him for reply.

Two more people have consented to serve THE AMERICAN CLASSICAL LEAGUE as Chairmen of their State Conference. They are:

COLORADO—Miss Anna Jane Hitchcock, 301 West 4th St., Florence

CONNECTICUT—Miss Ruth I. Stearns, 43 South Main St., West Hartford

There is always a feeling of gratitude in the LEAGUE office when another name is added to the list since these chairmen can and do serve the teachers in their state and the LEAGUE also. The LEAGUE wishes to thank the chairmen who have worked so faithfully to bring to the attention of teachers who are not members, the service the LEAGUE is willing and able to offer through membership. Through their efforts has come increased membership and as a result increased service to teachers.

Please cooperate with your chairmen in sending in to them the names of people who will be available to speak on interesting phases of the Classics at meetings, including school assemblies. In this way a Speakers Bureau can be built up in your state for your convenience.

Please forget that all criticism of the Classics should be answered. The LEAGUE holds itself ready to arm you with facts for a letter, an article, or a friendly visit to the critic.

The Editor regrets that in the LEAGUE Notice as it appeared in the January NOTES, the name "Georgia" was printed in place of "Oregon."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Latin Syllabus for the first two grades in Junior and Senior High Schools, prepared by a committee of New York City Latin teachers in 1932-33, is available in printed form. Copies may be secured for 20 cents from Mr. Frank Weissler, Third Floor, Board of Education, 500 Park Avenue, New York City.

Bound volumes of *LATIN NOTES* for the past twelve years are available from THE SERVICE BUREAU. Price \$1.25 per volume. The set as a whole may be secured for \$12.00.

Professor George Currie, Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham, Alabama, has prepared for sale plaques of Horace, Caesar, Cicero, and Vergil. A circular may be secured from the author giving descriptions of the various plaques and prices.

Houghton Mifflin Company is bringing out a collection of 473 stories, selected from the world's best literature, in a series of 11 volumes entitled *The Children's Hour*, all beautifully illustrated with 160 full-page colored pictures by well-known contemporary artists. Twenty-three of these pictures deal with classical mythology and these (including the set of 160) may be purchased from the publisher for \$3.00. Enlargements (19x28) will be available later. A list of titles may be obtained from THE SERVICE BUREAU FOR CLASSICAL TEACHERS or from the publisher. For further information, address D. E. Knight, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1136 Lincoln-Liberty Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa., or 386 Fourth Ave., New York City.

Copies of the Horatian Bimillennium number of *THE CLASSICAL JOURNAL* may be secured for 35 cents by addressing Professor Fred S. Dunham, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

SERVICE BUREAU MATERIAL AVAILABLE

Mimeographs may be purchased for 5 cents each, unless another price is stated. Printed items, however, known as *LATIN NOTES SUPPLEMENTS* and *BULLETINS*, must be purchased at the prices indicated. The material up to January first, 1935, has been listed in a printed *CATALOGUE* which is sold for 15 cents, or 20 if postage is required.

I. In Mimeographed Form

- (The numbering is continued from the January issue)
529. Character Building Through the Medium of Latin Literature. By *Elizabeth H. Hudson*, High School, Grosse Point, Michigan. Quotations used with the permission of the author and the Editor of *THE CLASSICAL JOURNAL*, January, 1936.
 530. Stories from Mythology, Told for You in Poetry. By *Richard L. Wing*, Senior in High School, Bedford, Mass. Prepared as a report for his English teacher on the subject, "Milton's Use of Mythology."
 531. *Sententiae Rei Publicae: Campaign Issues*, 63 B. C. Excerpts from an article in the Jan. 20, 1936, issue of *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* by *S. L. Mohler*, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa. (A comparison with modern times.) Price, 10 cents.

II. Latin Notes Supplements

- LII. Page References for Topics Dealing with Roman Private Life. Price 15 cents. For Supplements I-LI, see *CATALOGUE*. Supplement X is in process of revision.

III. Bulletins

- Bulletins I, II, and III are out of print. For a list of the others, see the *CATALOGUE*.

THE SERVICE BUREAU CATALOGUE contains a list of material on hand, January 1st, 1935. Those who wish to obtain a printed column of what has been prepared in 1936 (given in issues of *LATIN NOTES*) may secure it from THE BUREAU and fasten it in the Appendix of the *CATALOGUE*.